

# LAND USE

## AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### Existing Conditions

#### SUBAREAS

The study area for this EIS encompasses three zoning categories in three Urban Villages. Each of these areas has a distinct land use character that emphasizes different mixes of uses, ranging from the densest concentration of office space in Washington State to areas at the periphery of Downtown most notable for their surface parking lots. Downtown Seattle accommodates a wide range of densities and uses from high-rise office buildings to warehouses, surface parking lots to department stores, the new football stadium, to historic single room occupancy (SRO) hotels. Table 21 and Figure 14 present summaries of the range of land uses on Downtown Seattle parcels in the different subareas based on King County Assessor's data, surveys of the study area undertaken in 2001 and knowledge of recent construction in the area.

**Table 21**  
**Percent of Parcel Area by General Land Uses**

Subarea	Office	Hotel/ Motel	Indust./ Utility	Gov't Facility	Other Public/ Non-Profit Facility	Retail/ Service	Residential	Parking	Vacant
<b>Commercial Core</b>									
DOC1	56%	9%	0%	13%	12%	5%	1%	5%	0%
DOC2	14%	11%	0%	24%	7%	9%	2%	22%	11%
DMC	25%	5%	7%	15%	4%	7%	19%	19%	0%
<b>Denny Triangle</b>									
DOC2	18%	9%	7%	5%	22%	15%	5%	20%	0%
DMC	24%	7%	6%	5%	2%	19%	5%	31%	0%
<b>Belltown</b>									
DOC2	25%	0%	3%	0%	0%	15%	3%	54%	0%
DMC	26%	12%	0%	0%	4%	27%	12%	19%	1%
<b>Rest of Downtown</b>	20%	2%	14%	0%	6%	33%	10%	12%	4%
<b>Total Downtown</b>	25%	4%	9%	4%	7%	24%	8%	14%	3%

Source: King County Assessor; City of Seattle Strategic Planning Office, December 2001, parcel area excludes waterfront parcels.

#### Commercial Core

##### ***Downtown Office Core 1 (DOC1)***

The DOC1 zone, located approximately between Second Avenue and I-5 south of Union Street, is the Downtown zoning area with the densest pattern of land uses, predominantly consisting of large full- and half-block office buildings and hotels. Retail spaces in this area primarily serve Downtown office tenants. However, near the retail core, several buildings include ground-floor retail and restaurant uses to attract pedestrians and shoppers. There are few residential structures in the office core – all residential buildings in this area were built before 1940, and almost all of these are designated landmark structures. Single-use parking structures are much less frequent in this area than in other parts of Downtown, and in contrast to other parts of Downtown, there are no surface parking lots.



## DOWNTOWN SEATTLE LAND USES

Hotel/Motel	Parking
Industrial	Residential
Institutional	Retail/Service
Mixed Use	Vacant
Office	

	Zoning Boundary
	Publicly Owned Property
	Outside Study Area

FIGURE 14

Strategic Planning Office  
City of Seattle  
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The DOC1 zone contains a variety of public uses, institutional uses and private clubs. The southern portion of the core contains the City of Seattle and King County government centers with administrative office uses, as well as public safety, courthouse and support facilities. The federal government also occupies a variety of office facilities and the current Federal Courthouse in the core area. Cultural and convention facilities include the Washington State Convention Center, Benaroya Symphony Hall, the Seattle Public Library's central branch and the Seattle Art Museum. Churches and other organizations located in this area include the Plymouth Congregational Church, First United Methodist Church, the Downtown YMCA, the Women's University Club and the Rainier Club.

### ***Downtown Office Core 2 (DOC2)***

The DOC2 zone at the south end of the Commercial Core is a one-to-two block buffer and transition area between the denser DOC1 area and the historic districts (Pioneer Square and the Chinatown/International District) to the south and west. Although small, this area has three distinct use patterns. At its eastern edge near 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Yesler Way, properties are predominantly vacant or used for surface and garage parking and are mostly publicly owned. The central portion of this DOC2 zone accommodates some of King County and the City of Seattle's government office buildings, and a few subsidized housing structures. The character of the western portion of the DOC2 zone, along 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, reflects the character of the adjacent Pioneer Square and Office Core areas consisting of newer office towers mingled with historic commercial and residential buildings.

### ***Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC)***

This area extends along First and Western Avenues between Union and Columbia Streets. Historically a warehouse and commercial district serving the waterfront, it currently serves as a transition between the Pike Place Market, the waterfront and Pioneer Square and the Office Core.

The transition area between the Pike Place Market and the retail core contains several commercial, office and residential buildings from the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The ground-level uses in this area include a variety of smaller-scale commercial uses oriented to Market shoppers and Downtown residents, restaurant and adult entertainment uses, and a scattering of parking lots and garages. This area, with the adjacent Pike Place Market, has the greatest concentration of housing in the Commercial Core. Residential buildings in the area range from the Harbor Steps Apartments and Newmark condominiums to the non-profit-managed Gatewood Hotel. With the construction of Harbor Steps and Newmark in the 1990s, this area is the only portion of the Commercial Core where significant new residential development has occurred.

Land uses along Western and First Avenues between Union and Columbia Streets transition from the higher-density office buildings in the DOC-1 to older office/warehouse-style buildings with historical character near the waterfront and Pioneer Square. However, newer residential complexes such as Harbor Steps and institutional uses such as the old Federal Building are also present. Some blocks contain highly improved uses such as the Alexis Hotel and Watermark Building, while the structures across the street contain vacant floors, adult-oriented businesses and pawnshops in older lower-scale structures. The area along Western Avenue contains a concentration of furniture and interior design-oriented businesses, many of which serve higher-end residential markets and the Downtown office market. Western and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue are separated by a large elevation change at the north end of this area, but are linked by the Harbor Steps and a lower grade change south of Spring Street.

## **Denny Triangle**

### ***Downtown Office Core 2 (DOC2)***

The DOC2 zone in the Denny Triangle is north of the DOC1 zone wrapping around the northern edge of the retail core. For the purposes of this study, the three DOC2 zoned blocks at the north end of the Commercial Core are analyzed as part of the Denny Triangle. This area is approximately bounded by Union Street and Boren Avenue, zigzagging to Blanchard Street and then south to Olive Way. Historically, with the adjacent DMC zone, this area supported light manufacturing, warehouse, and early automobile-oriented uses. Many of these structures have been converted to new uses. The land use pattern currently transitions from dense office, hotel and commercial retail uses in the south to relatively low-density older uses further north. The land use pattern in the southern portion reflects its adjacency to the retail core and Convention Center. The area features large retail and entertainment facilities such as the Pacific Place shopping mall, the Paramount and Meridian Theaters and large hotels such as the Sheraton, the Camlin and the newer Elliott Hotel. Overall, density of use decreases in blocks further from the retail core and convention center, providing a transition to the less-developed area to the north.

The Denny Triangle DOC2 zone contains a broad range of uses, often highly varied within the same block, from high-rise office buildings to parking lots or lowrise structures. Larger buildings include the new 24-story 1700 Seventh Avenue building, the Marsh and McLennan Building, the Bell Plaza building, and the Westin, Camlin and Vance Hotels. In addition to these hotels, several smaller hotels or motels are located in the area, such as the Sixth Avenue Motor Inn. Residential uses include two market-rate residential towers: the new Metropolitan Tower Apartments, and the Tower@801, built in 1970. In addition, there are a number of smaller-scale subsidized housing projects, such as the new 60-unit Stewart House, built in conjunction with the 1700 Seventh Avenue building. Other subsidized buildings include the Julie, Larned and Westlake Apartments, all built in the early 1900s and renovated in the 1990s. The new Federal Courthouse, West Precinct police station, Convention Place transit station, Urban Rest Stop and Washington State Library for the Blind are institutional uses in this subarea. Several sites, including whole blocks, are vacant or underdeveloped with surface parking lots, car dealerships and small-scale retail buildings. However, a number of new buildings have been built in this area: the 1700 Seventh Avenue office tower and Stewart House, the new Federal Courthouse, the Convention Center expansion, the Elliott Hotel, the new Metropolitan Tower apartment building and the West Police Precinct.

### ***Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC)***

The Denny Triangle DMC zone, north of the DOC2 zone, is approximately bounded by I-5, Denny Way, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and a zigzag edge between Blanchard Street and Boren Avenue. This area has a relatively low-density land use pattern mixed with occasional denser uses, similar to the northern portion of the DOC2 zone. The area has a wide range of uses and building sizes, with clusters of uses ranging from east to west; however, surface parking lots are prevalent throughout the area, making up 31% of the parcel area. Three large office buildings, the Metropolitan Park buildings, are located at the southeast corner of the area, adjacent to Interstate 5. At the eastern end of the area are nightclubs, a new hotel and housing projects, along with several surface parking lots. Near Fairview Avenue are clustered a small number of not-for-profit agencies such as Youth Care's Orion Center and the Dutch Shisler Sobering Support Center. Between Fairview and Westlake Avenues are found older warehouse buildings, many converted to office use, such as the Quinton Instruments Building, and small retail/service uses. Cornish College for the Arts will be moving into the Lenora Square and Sons of Norway Hall buildings in this area. Automotive uses such as automobile dealerships and Elephant Car Wash are located to the west of Westlake Avenue. This area also has a number of motels dating from the 1950s and 1960s, and is home to Antioch University. To the south of Antioch are a couple of office buildings, the 12-story Denny Building from 1968, and the 15-story Blanchard Plaza building from 1983. The vacant former U.A. Cinemas site is across the street from these buildings to the south.

## **Belltown**

### ***Downtown Office Core 2 (DOC2) and Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC)***

This area extends along the eastern and southern edges of Belltown, to the northeast corner of the Pike Place Market. It provides a transition between the residential core of Belltown and the Denny Triangle, the retail core, and the Pike Place Market. Transitions in type and/or density of land uses occur within these areas, reflecting shifts in the intended purpose or orientation of the adjacent areas. For example, Belltown's DMC zoned area adjacent to the Denny Triangle contains a variety of uses, such as surface parking lots, 1960s-era motels and automobile showrooms as well as new residential buildings, popular restaurants and the Cinerama Movie Theater.

The south end of Belltown contains a mix of older hotel, retail and business services uses and office buildings, reflecting the long-term commercial use of the vicinity and general proximity to the retail core. However, there are also numerous older and newer residential structures, indicative of the area's past and present attractiveness for residential uses. Among these residential buildings are a number of larger older hotel buildings such as the Moore, Josephinum and Calhoun, dating back to the first phase of development in the Denny Regrade, in the early 1900s. The area remains attractive for residential development, providing amenities attractive to new households, including proximity to service and entertainment uses in the Pike Place Market, retail core, Belltown, and views of Elliott Bay. The DOC2 portion of the area consists of two and a half blocks adjacent to the Retail Core. Entertainment uses, such as the Moore Theater, are distributed within this area, and several restaurants attract much evening activity. Parking lots and garages intermittently occur.

## **SURROUNDING AREAS**

The study area includes the principal Downtown commercial zones and a majority of the Downtown Urban Center, but not Pioneer Square and the International District to the south. In addition, most of the Belltown neighborhood, the Pike Place Market, Retail Core and the Waterfront are omitted from the study area.

Other adjacent neighborhoods are located outside of the Downtown Urban Center. South Lake Union and the Cascade neighborhood border the area on the north. Pike/Pine, First Hill and the southwest portion of Capitol Hill are across Interstate 5 at the eastern border of the area. The Uptown Queen Anne Urban Center, which includes the Seattle Center, is northwest of the study area.

**Pioneer Square** is characterized by a mix of historic commercial and residential structures with a strong street-level presence. The edges of the study area provide transitions between the historic character and infrastructure of Pioneer Square and the Downtown Office Core 1 zone.

Grade changes and surface parking lots currently provide a buffer between the core of the **International District/Chinatown** and the study area. However, some of the densest residential areas of the International District are located on the hill just south of the office core. Beyond the International District hill, the neighborhood is characterized by numerous older mixed-use residential buildings, street level retail uses and older industrial buildings. Newer office and commercial buildings including the redeveloped Union Station have created an influx of new residents and employees to this neighborhood.

The **central waterfront** has a distinct identity related to historic pier structures and retail uses. The Washington State ferry terminal and several marine and tourist attractions including the Seattle Aquarium also contribute to the character of this area. The Alaskan Way Viaduct and railroad tracks form a perceptual barrier separating the waterfront from the adjacent Western Avenue vicinity. On a bluff above the Waterfront, and adjacent to the Commercial Core and Belltown DMC zones, the historic **Pike Place**

**Market** area contains a fine-grain mixture of retail and tourist-oriented uses, including hotels. The Market vicinity also includes several market-rate and subsidized residential buildings. The **Retail Core** is centrally located Downtown, surrounded by the study area. The area's retail shopping is anchored by two major department stores, two indoor shopping malls, and several street-level retail businesses. A few office towers also dot the area, some of which include street-level and mezzanine retail uses.

North of the Market and Retail Core, the **Belltown** neighborhood overlooks Elliott Bay, extending eastward to Fifth Avenue. Its mix of residential and commercial uses has changed considerably over the last 20 years with new residential development, but most prominently along the hillside at Elliott, Western and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenues. The eastern portion of Belltown is generally developed with one- and two-story commercial structures, and slightly taller brick residential buildings, punctuated by occasional office and residential towers, and surface parking lots. To the north of Belltown is the **Uptown/Seattle Center** neighborhood with its mix of office, residential, retail, and entertainment/recreational uses.

North of Downtown is **South Lake Union** with its mix of office and warehouse and light manufacturing uses close to Downtown, including the Seattle Times. A number of biotechnology and high-tech uses have developed in the north end of this neighborhood, close to the lake. Adjacent to I-5 and the Denny Triangle is the mixed-use **Cascade** community with residential, office, retail and light industrial uses.

Northeast of the Denny Triangle is the residential community of **Capitol Hill** with its midrise apartment and condominium structures, and small-scale neighborhood-serving retail uses. South of Capitol Hill is the **Pike/Pine** neighborhood with its growing collection of mixed-use residential/retail buildings and lower-scale retail and automobile-oriented buildings. South of Pike/Pine and adjacent to the study area is **First Hill** with its high-rise residential buildings, churches, major hospitals, employee-serving retail uses and surface parking lots used by Downtown commuters.

## **Land Use Pattern and Recent Development Activity**

As described above, Downtown Seattle contains a wide mix of uses, often housed in high-rise towers, but also accommodated within a large range of building types and forms. This section of the Draft EIS describes these uses and recent development trends.

### **OFFICE**

#### **Amount and Location of Office Space**

The entire Downtown Seattle/Central Business District office market currently has approximately 35,321,000 square feet (SF) of office space in 278 buildings. Between Denny Way and Yesler Way there are 178 office buildings containing approximately 26,225,000 square feet of office space, or 74% of the total Central Business District office market.

The highest concentration of Downtown office space is in the DOC1 area, with high-rise private offices in the central financial district and mid-rise government offices at the south end. Other concentrations are at the south end of the Denny Triangle DOC2 zone, including portions of the retail core. Large office buildings are also dispersed north of the retail core along 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues and adjacent to Interstate 5 in the Denny Triangle's DMC zone. For more information about the location of Downtown Office uses, please see Appendix C.

## **Recent Development History and Absorption**

“Absorption” compares the amount of office space newly built and/or demolished to the amount of space newly occupied and/or vacated. Typically, positive market absorption represents space that is now leased, that was not previously leased. Negative absorption indicates that space formerly leased has become vacant. Between 1988 and 2001, the rate of Downtown office space absorption averaged approximately 820,000 SF annually. In the five years between 1996 and 2001, absorption averaged 940,000 SF annually. Over this same five-year period, 4,875,000 SF was added to the Downtown office market. Projects built during this time include One Convention Center; 505 Union Station; Opus Center East, West and South; 1700 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; Millennium Tower; World Trade Center East, West and North; King Street Center; Fisher Plaza; and Metropolitan Park III.

By the end of 2001, however, a large amount of office space was added to the available supply both through subleases and through tenants not renewing leases, resulting in a negative absorption rate. According to CB Richard Ellis, at the end of 2001, the vacancy rate for office space in the Downtown CBD and the Denny Regrade was 10 percent. Just under 2.5 million square feet of office space were available in these two subareas. Net absorption for the entire Downtown Seattle area was a negative 500,000 square feet in the fourth quarter of 2001 because a number of companies went out of business and construction of new office buildings was completed. Since 2001, three additional office buildings, the IDX Tower, the Fifth & Bell Building and the Gray Cary Building in the Chinatown/International District, have been completed. One private office project is under construction as of Fall 2003, the 9<sup>th</sup> & Stewart Life Sciences Building is being built by the Touchstone Corporation for Corixa, a biotechnology firm. Generally, new office space that is not specifically built for a particular tenant will likely not be built until the vacancy rate drops, and absorption rates become positive.

Seattle’s largest office buildings, spread throughout the DOC1 and adjacent DRC zone, were built during a construction boom that lasted throughout the 1980s. The 1.5-million square foot Bank of America (Columbia) Center is joined by six other buildings at or above 1 million square feet: U.S. Bank Center (in the DRC zone), Two Union Square, Washington Mutual Tower, Seafirst Fifth Avenue Plaza, the Wells Fargo Building and Key Tower. All of these buildings were built between 1980 and 1990 on full blocks, and were permitted under previous Downtown regulations. In 1985, with adoption of a Downtown plan, and again in 1989 because of a citizens’ initiative, height and density limits were reduced.

More recently, Downtown office projects have been built around the edges of the DOC1 zone, incorporating a broader mix of uses than were found in earlier generations of development. The largest buildings built in the study area under current land use code provisions include:

- **One Convention Place**, permitted as part of the expansion of the Washington State Convention & Trade Center. The first five stories of the 300-foot tall building are expanded Convention Center meeting rooms and entry areas. Above the Convention Center are 16 floors of private office space. With 308,580 SF on 22 floors, its floorplates range from 14,400 SF to 20,300 SF.
- **Millennium Tower**, a mixed-use office, condominium and retail building in the DOC2 zone. Above ground-floor retail are 13 office floors and 6 floors containing luxury condominiums. The office floors average 14,500 leasable square feet, totaling 188,000 SF of office space.
- **1700 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (or Nordstrom Office Tower)**, built in the DOC2 zone, a 24-story office tower. It contains 538,000 SF of office use and 22,000 SF of retail on two levels. The building also includes seven levels of underground parking. In conjunction with this building, the Housing Resources Group is constructing Stewart Court, a 60-unit subsidized housing project next door. The developers of 1700 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue were able to use the commercial development rights available on the Stewart Court lot and in exchange helped to subsidize the cost of the land under Stewart Court.

- **IDX Tower**, the last major office tower completed Downtown. It is the largest office building built in Seattle since 1990. This office tower wraps around the historic Downtown Seattle YMCA building, and uses some of the development rights available from the YMCA site. On a 40,000 square foot site, the building contains a 7-story podium along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and a 33-story tower north of the YMCA building. With 846,600 total SF, typical floor plates average 24,000 SF.

Except for the IDX Tower, these buildings were built at the edges of the traditional office core, indicating an expansion of the character of the DOC1 zone into surrounding areas to the north, south and west.

### **Proposed Projects**

As of Fall 2003, at least twenty office projects had been proposed for Downtown Seattle. These projects would include 6,735,700 SF of office space. In these projects, there is enough proposed office space to accommodate between 7.5 and 8.5 years of demand, based on average annual historical absorption rates. Not all of these projects will likely be built. A number of these projects are still in the conceptual stage, and some are “on hold” indefinitely and will be re-examined when demand for new office space starts to increase. Only a handful will come on-line when currently projected. The amount of pre-leased space is the greatest factor affecting decisions to develop. For most developers, construction financing hinges on whether a certain percentage of space can be leased before construction. The exact percentage is unique to every developer and each project, but it ranges somewhere between 10% and 50% of the project. The proposed office projects are listed in Appendix C.

## **HOTELS AND MOTELS**

### **Amount and Location of Hotel Rooms**

Downtown Seattle currently has over 8,000 hotel rooms in 40 buildings. The Downtown hotel market consists of twelve major hotels with 4,764 rooms, and a number of smaller hotels ranging from 20 rooms to 300 rooms. In November 2001, Downtown hotels had an overall occupancy rate of approximately 58%, down from 70% in 2000 (Stephen Dunphy quote of Wolfgang Rood Hospitality, *Seattle Times*, “*The Newsletter: No Need to Leave the Light On*”, 1/16/02). However, hotel occupancy has improved somewhat since that time.

Seattle’s largest hotels are found within five blocks of the Convention Center and retail core. These hotels include the Westin Seattle and the Seattle Sheraton with over 800 rooms apiece. Other major hotels include the Renaissance Madison with over 500 rooms, and the Four Seasons Olympic, the Seattle Hilton, the Seattle W Hotel and the newer Elliott Hotel, each with more than 400 rooms. Two office towers that were converted to hotels in the last decade, the Red Lion Hotel and the Monaco Hotel, are also near these larger hotels.

Smaller hotels are scattered throughout Downtown, although a number are found near 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to serve tourists visiting Pioneer Square and the Pike Place Market. More automobile-oriented motels are found along 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues, most built to serve the 1962 World’s Fair.

### **Recent Development History**

Four types of new hotels have been built Downtown in the last ten years: new full-service hotels, conversions of office buildings to full-service hotels, new limited-service hotels and renovations of existing buildings into boutique hotels. The following new Downtown hotels are in or adjacent to the study area:

- **Seattle W Hotel**, in the DOC1 zone, across the street from the Four Seasons Olympic Hotel, was the first new major hotel building to be built in Downtown Seattle since 1983. The W is a 26-story tower

with a ground-floor restaurant and bar, meeting rooms. The W has 426 hotel rooms and suites in 272,000 SF with approximately 10,000 SF floorplates.

- **Elliott Grand Hyatt Hotel**, like the One Convention Place office building, was incorporated into the recent expansion of the Washington State Convention Center. Built in conjunction with the Convention Center's 950 space parking garage, the Elliott contains 425 rooms in a 29-story building, including 40,000 SF of restaurant space. The fourth floor of the building contains 98,000 SF of Convention Center space. The hotel itself is 410,000 square feet with approximately 14,000 SF floorplates.
- The 11-story **Paramount Hotel** was finished in 1996. Located on Pine Street across the street to the northeast from the Elliott, it was the first hotel to be built downtown since 1983. Its 146 rooms average 325 square feet.
- The **Monaco** and **Red Lion Hotels** were originally office buildings built in 1969 and 1973 respectively. The 134,000 SF Monaco contains 189 guestrooms in eleven stories with a ground floor restaurant and lounge. The Red Lion is a 297-room hotel with 272,800 SF in 19 stories.
- Marriott's **SpringHill Suites** is a new limited-service hotel at the edge of Downtown in the Denny Triangle. It contains 234 suites, a restaurant and lounge on ten floors. The building is 96,000 SF in size.

Except for the SpringHill Suites, all of these new hotels are within a block of an existing hotel and close to the retail core and the Convention Center.

### **Proposed Projects**

A number of hotels have been discussed over the last three years. The Seattle Sheraton, currently over 800 rooms, has considered a 400-room expansion. Two other hotels have been proposed near the retail core. One would be built on the block between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Stewart Street and Olive Way. This project would contain a 300-room luxury hotel and condominiums. Another mixed-use structure including a hotel has been proposed for the half-block adjacent to the Bon Parking Garage at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Pine Street. This project would contain a large amount of retail space, a 189-room luxury hotel and 31 condominiums. The 358-room Marriott Hotel was recently completed along Alaskan Way adjacent to the Port of Seattle's Bell Harbor Conference Center. Also, a mixed-use hotel building has been proposed for the Warshal's Sporting Goods site at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Madison Street. This project would contain a 100- to 200-room hotel and condominiums. Most of these projects are in the conceptual design stage and may not be built.

## **HOUSING**

### **Amount and Location of Residential Buildings**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 12,852 housing units in the Downtown Urban Center. The largest concentration of units is in the Belltown neighborhood. Most of the blocks between 5<sup>th</sup> and Elliott Avenues contain at least one residential structure. Other housing concentrations Downtown are in and around the Pike Place Market, in Pioneer Square and along 6<sup>th</sup> and Maynard Avenues in the Chinatown/International District.

Within the study area, the largest concentration of housing can be found along the edge of the abutting Belltown and the Pike Place Market along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Another, small concentration of housing is located in the northeast corner of the Denny Triangle, close to the Pike/Pine, Capitol Hill and Cascade neighborhoods. Table 22 shows the number of units in each urban village according to the most recent U.S. Census. For more description of housing in Downtown Seattle, please see the Housing chapter.

**Table 22**  
**Downtown Urban Center Village Housing Units**

Urban Village	Census Units
Belltown	6,707
Chinatown/International District	1,641
Commercial Core	2,780
Denny Triangle	927
Pioneer Square	797
Total Downtown Urban Center	12,852

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

### **Recent Development Activity**

Over the past decade, several new residential buildings have been built in Downtown Seattle, many in the Belltown Urban Village. Some residential buildings built in the study area may be indicative of future residential building types in Downtown Seattle. These include:

- **Metropolitan Tower** is a high-rise apartment building in the Denny Triangle's DOC 2 zone and is the first market rate apartment building to be built in the Denny Triangle since 1970. Its 366 units average 900 SF, ranging from 500 to 1,500 SF. Units provided range from studios to 3 bedroom units. The building includes ground floor retail space, a spa with swimming pool and concierge services.
- **Millennium Tower** contains six floors of high-end condominiums on top of 15 floors of office space. It is the first new building with residential units to be built in the Commercial Core DOC2-240 zone in ninety years. Its condominiums range in size from 2,300 to 10,000 square feet. The project includes the maximum permitted office floor area, and because residential uses are exempt from floor area limits and there was additional permitted building height and bulk, the developer maximized the building area by adding condominiums. This closely-watched project has had difficulties selling its luxury condominiums, which may discourage similar buildings of this type in the near term.
- **Stewart Court** – a subsidized residential project in the Denny Triangle's DOC2 zone. This project was made feasible by construction of the 1700 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Project. A subsurface alley vacation made it possible for the developer of 1700 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to use development rights from the adjacent Stewart Court site, in addition to gaining bonused commercial floor area. The office developer, through a housing bonus agreement, subsidized development of Stewart Place as a 65-unit housing project affordable to low-income households. Twenty studio and 45 one-bedroom units occupy a 6-story building with ground floor retail and below-grade parking.

During the summer of 2003, five residential buildings were under construction in Downtown Seattle. These projects range from the Cristilla condominium tower at Second and Lenora, which will contain almost 200 new units in a primarily single-purpose residential structure, to the International District Village Square project at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. & S. Dearborn Street which will combine fifty-seven units with a new library, community center and human service uses. Overall, these new buildings will add 244 market-rate units and 252 subsidized units Downtown.

### **Proposed Projects**

As of the summer of 2003, at least 18 new residential projects with more than 2,000 dwelling units are proposed in Downtown. Almost all of these projects combine a mix of uses. Ground floor retail space is common in Downtown residential projects. However, some projects propose to combine office or hotel uses

and residential uses. Proposed or under-construction projects with residential uses are shown in Appendix C. Many of these were first proposed before the decline of the residential real estate market in 2001, and may change significantly before they are constructed.

## **RETAIL**

### **Amount and Location of Retail Space**

Retail space is located throughout the Downtown Urban Center. Street level, office-serving retail space is common in much of the office core. Tourist-oriented retail uses are frequently found near tourist destinations, such as Pioneer Square, the waterfront and the Pike Place Market. Residential-oriented retail services are growing in the Belltown area. However, the city's major concentration of retail space is in and around the Retail Core centered on Pike and Pine Streets between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Here the size of retail uses range from small shops to department stores with over 1,000,000 square feet of retail space.

### **Recent Development Activity**

The most recent major retail project in Downtown Seattle is the Pacific Place shopping mall in the DOC2 zone at the north end of the Commercial Core. This facility includes a City-subsidized 1,200-space short-term parking garage with a 325,000 SF complex with a mix of retail, restaurants and cinemas. Additional retail space has been added as part of the Convention Center expansion, primarily at the base of the Elliott Hotel.

### **Proposed Projects**

Two proposed new major retail spaces are not purely retail but combine sizable retail spaces with residential and commercial space. The Avalon Hotel is a mixed-use project including a 6-story, 148,000 square foot department store. This project, a block away from both the Bon Marché and the Pike Place Market, would help extend the retail core to the west. The Milliken/Vulcan project at 2200 Westlake Avenue would include the second grocery store in Downtown Seattle and the first full-size grocery north of the International District as part of a large mixed-use complex, with a total of 93,000 square feet of retail space.

## **HUMAN SERVICES**

### **Amount and Location of Human Services Facilities**

Downtown Seattle Human Service agencies provide a broad range of services to the residential and employee populations in Downtown Seattle and the region as a whole. Services provided by human service agencies in the study area include:

- Child care
- Emergency shelters;
- Short-term transitional housing facilities;
- Permanent subsidized housing with on-site human service facilities;
- Alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs;
- Mental health counseling and medical care programs; and
- Education, legal and job referral and training facilities.

A 1999 survey of Downtown Seattle Human Services providers identified 58 different agencies operating 99 separate programs providing human services in the Downtown Urban Center. Thirty-three of those programs are located in the study area. Several human service agencies own their own buildings, especially long-established agencies, those that provide housing or shelter, and government-run facilities. Providers without their own buildings often co-locate with a church or other provider. Others lease space

in older, smaller office or retail spaces less attractive to market-rate tenants. Of the 58 identified agencies, nine non-governmental agencies could be identified as locating in privately owned buildings. Seven of those nine buildings are located within the study area. Washington State and Federal Government agencies also lease space in private buildings.

Some human service agencies provide services without office space in Downtown Seattle. Operation Sack Lunch brings lunches to the homeless in Downtown Seattle from locations outside of Seattle.

### **Recent Development Activity**

Some of the largest recent Downtown human service projects have combined human services and residential uses. For example, the International District Village Square project built by the Seattle Chinatown/International District PDA includes residential units, mental health transitional housing, a social service agency, retail space and restaurant space. The Dutch Sisler Sobering Center/Harbor House project developed by the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health and the Community Psychiatric Clinic combines a short-term sobering center for chronic public inebriates with a longer-term transitional housing facility for the mentally ill. The Urban Rest Stop in the Denny Triangle was recently created on the ground floor of LIHI's Julie Apartments. The Boomtown Café has been located in the Morrison Hotel building. Senior Services of Seattle/King County built a combined human service office and senior housing project in Belltown outside of the study area. The Lillian Rice Center contains three floors of program and administrative space for Senior Services, and five additional floors of low-income housing for seniors. Finally, within the Belltown DMC-240 zone, YWCA is building the Opportunity Place project, combining counseling, food and health services for homeless women, job counseling, training and placement services and 145 apartments for very-low-income women.

### **Proposed Projects**

A few agencies have proposed new combinations of human services and housing. LIHI has received permit approval for a new 7-story building containing LIHI's offices and five stories of housing at the north end of Belltown. Another project, to be built by the Downtown Emergency Services Center, will provide housing and supportive services for street alcoholics in the DMC-125 zone in the Denny Triangle.

On the other hand, some human services agencies have faced displacement because of redevelopment of existing buildings or concern about their impacts. Street Outreach Services, which provides a number of services for the homeless and drug users, was forced to move in 2001. The agency's rent had been eighty cents per square foot per month, significantly less than the thirty dollars per square foot per month that was being asked for some retail spaces in the retail core four blocks away. The agency was able to find new office space, but has not been able to find a location for a Downtown drop-in center.

## **LANDMARK STRUCTURES AND DISTRICTS**

There are 27 designated City of Seattle Landmark buildings in the different subareas. The biggest concentrations of landmark buildings are in the Belltown and Commercial Core DMC zones along 1st Avenue generally between Madison and Seneca Streets. Other groupings of City landmarks occur near Pioneer Square and along Cherry Street. In addition, six buildings within the study area have been designated Washington Historic Register and National Register landmarks, but not City landmarks. Most of these structures are owned by the Federal Government or a Washington State agency. The study area is adjacent to three City, State and Federally designated historic districts, the International District Special Review District, the Pike Place Market Historic District and the Pioneer Square Preservation District. In addition to the landmarks within the study area, 21 City landmarks are within one or two blocks of the study area. These landmarks are listed and mapped in Appendix D.

## Recent Renovations

A few landmarks within the study area have been substantially renovated over the last 5 years, including the Downtown Seattle YMCA, completed in 2000. Its 100,000 SF contain the Gates Youth Development Center, an expanded pool, gymnasium, exercise areas, locker rooms with steam, sauna, and whirlpool, racquetball and handball courts, administrative offices, and young-adult transitional housing units. Renovation was funded through a variety of mechanisms, including use of the City of Seattle's Transfer of Development Rights program and through a partnership with the developers of the adjacent IDX Tower.

The Julie Apartments is a landmark apartment building in the Denny Triangle. It was renovated in 1999 by LIHI, with funding coming from several sources, including the City's Transfer of Development Rights program. The 1929 building now includes 47 low-income units, a ground-floor grocery and the Urban Rest Stop, which provides laundry and hygiene facilities to the homeless.

The historic Dexter Horton office building was recently extensively renovated. It was sold by the City of Seattle, which had used it for City offices for 12 years. The current renovation includes earthquake stabilization and an updating of the office space. The Exchange Building northwest of the Dexter Horton Building was renovated in 1999 and 2000.

## VACANT AND UNDERUSED SITES

Downtown Seattle is the densest commercial area in the Pacific Northwest. However, numerous blocks contain vacant parcels, surface parking lots, or relatively small buildings compared to the maximum size of a building that could be developed. Figure 15 illustrates vacant and underutilized sites that are considered by this study to be redevelopable in the future. This study divides potentially redevelopable sites into Primary and Secondary development sites, depending on existing use, ownership, location and general ease of development. The study classified 166 parcels (55.6 acres) as primary development sites and 78 sites (16.4 acres) as secondary sites. Table 23 shows current land uses on these sites.

**Table 23**  
**Existing Uses on Vacant and Underutilized Sites**

Use	Primary Sites			Secondary Sites		
	Parcel Area (SF)	Building Size (SF)	Average FAR	Parcel Area (SF)	Building Size (SF)	Average FAR
Parking	1,102,455	658,422	0.6	221,059	110,050	0.5
Retail/Service	493,474	532,903	1.1	158,895	152,716	1.0
Office	273,655	669,134	2.4	87,470	198,085	2.3
Industrial/Utility	146,282	187,589	1.3	154,457	359,801	2.3
Government Facility	112,658	455,825	4.0	0	0	0.0
Vacant	108,595	0	0.0	7,200	0	0.0
Other Public/Non-Profit Facility	103,320	268,145	2.6	27,960	59,986	2.1
Hotel/Motel	91,395	111,680	1.2	6,660	35,820	5.4
Residential	20,492	93,498	4.6	36,840	190,900	5.2
TOTAL	2,452,326	2,977,196	1.2	700,541	1,107,358	1.6

Source: King County Assessor, Cushman & Wakefield

Office uses represent the next largest category of underdeveloped sites. The average FAR on underutilized sites is less than 2.5 FAR. Office buildings within the study area are currently permitted to be built to FAR limits between 7 and 14, three to six times the average size on underutilized sites. Office buildings surrounded by surface parking lots were particularly identified as potential redevelopment sites.

Industrial and utility sites Downtown were also identified as underutilized. Industrial structures Downtown are most often warehouse buildings, both mini-warehouse and larger warehouse buildings. However, there remain some heavier industrial uses in the Denny Triangle, such as printing companies. Downtown utilities that can be considered underutilized include Seattle City Light and Seattle Steam sites.

Utility uses were generally categorized as secondary sites given their owners' long-term interest in serving Downtown Seattle. Transportation facilities such as the Greyhound Terminal in the Denny Triangle were also classified in the industrial/utility category. While these facilities provide important services, owners are likely to redevelop these properties if they want to maximize their investments.

Government facilities include all sites currently owned by government agencies, including properties in the City of Seattle's Municipal Campus identified for redevelopment, such as the Public Safety Building site. Other such sites include King County's Goat Hill properties, currently used as a surface parking lot, and the Central Post Office, which is in a relatively small building compared to the maximum permitted space on the site.

Vacant sites are those not currently used for any use, not even a surface parking lot. If a vacant structure was on the site, it was classified according to its last use. Vacant sites with no structures are prime sites for redevelopment, unless they are very small.

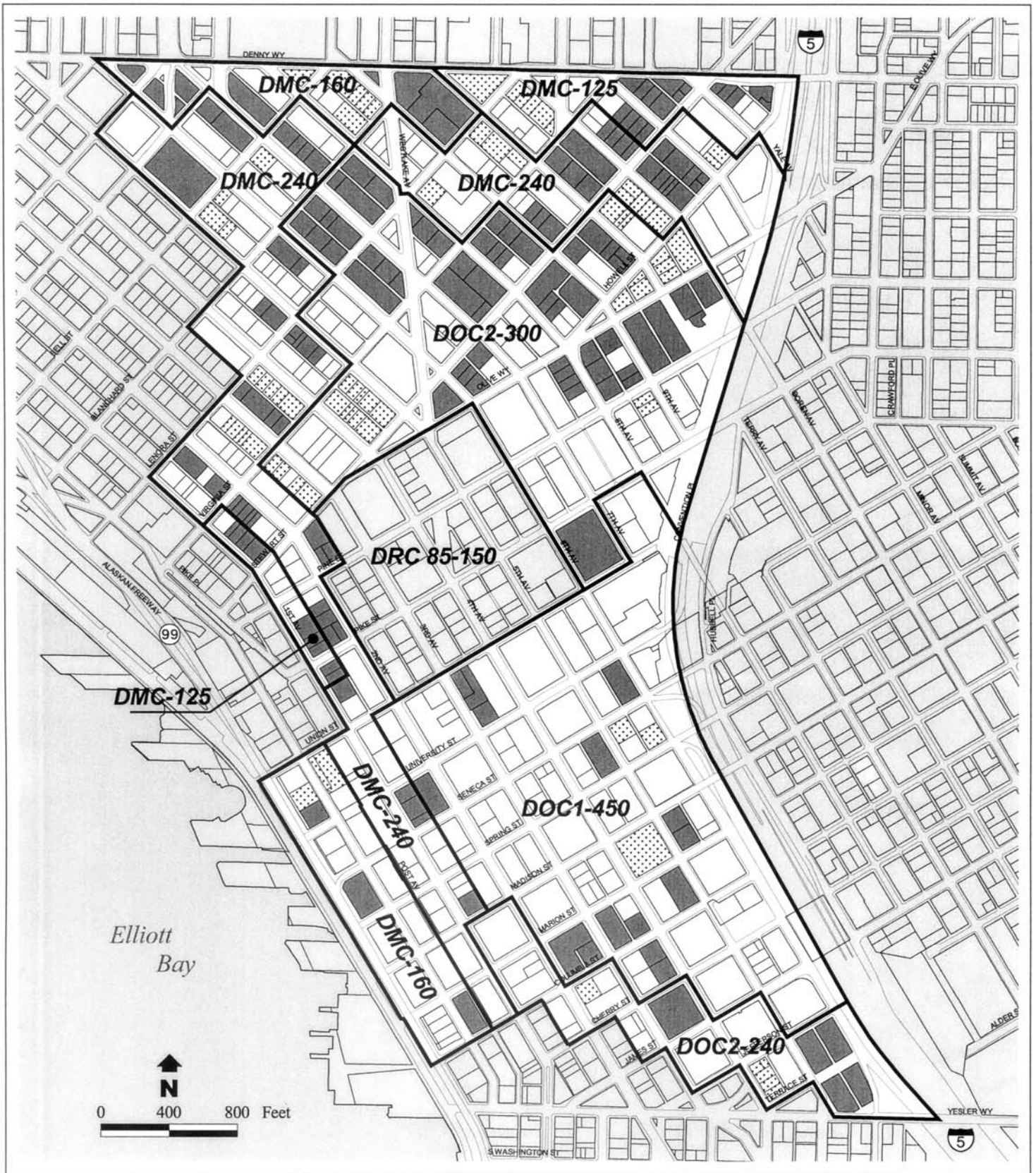
Other public or non-profit facilities include small buildings owned or occupied by non-profit organizations, churches, private clubs, schools and childcare facilities, and other private organizations that do not fit into the other categories. A number of Downtown churches were identified as redevelopable, in part based on their recent interest in redevelopment opportunities. Non-profit agencies in small buildings may consider redevelopment if there are opportunities to expand in equally accessible locations.

A few of Downtown Seattle's motels were identified as redevelopable, because of their comparatively low-density use. These motels are generally along Fifth and Sixth Avenues in the Denny Triangle.

Six residential buildings with 296 units were identified as redevelopable, given their size and surrounding low-density development. These sites are discussed in more detail in the Housing section.

## **Current Zoning Classifications**

The study area is subject to three different zoning designations: Downtown Office Core 1 (DOC 1), Downtown Office Core 2 (DOC 2) and the Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) zone, as shown on Figure 16. These zones are all intended to accommodate a wide range of uses, and are differentiated primarily by the density of the buildings permitted. However, DOC 1 and DOC 2 are generally intended to provide locations for concentrated office development to accommodate employment growth. The DMC zone allows for a greater mix of commercial uses and housing to accommodate both employment and residential growth. Height limits and floor area ratios (FAR) are the defining factor in how these areas are regulated, rather than the mix of uses permitted or prohibited. See the Urban Design section of this chapter for additional information and discussion of zones, height limits and density limits.



**DOC 1.** The Downtown Office Core 1 zone is intended to function as a high-density office and commercial area with related support services and retail shopping. This area is intended to be the densest of all areas Downtown, with the tallest height limits, in order to capitalize on existing transportation and utilities infrastructure. The DOC 1 zone has an existing height limit of 450 feet, and a maximum commercial FAR limit of 14 FAR.

**DOC 2.** The Downtown Office Core 2 zone is intended to accommodate significant office densities and provide a transition between the Office Core 1 zone and less dense areas north and south of the Downtown core. Office uses are a primary emphasis, along with other commercial uses, retail shopping and services to support the DOC 1 area. The DOC 2 zones in the study area have existing height limits of 300 and 240 feet, and a maximum commercial FAR limit of 10 FAR.

**DMC.** The Downtown Mixed Commercial zone is intended for “lower-scale” office, retail and commercial uses supportive of the Office Core, along with housing and services for that housing. Buildings are expected to be lower in order to provide a transition between the office core and the surrounding lower-density neighborhoods. The DMC zones in the study area have existing height limits of 125, 160 and 240 feet, and a maximum commercial FAR limit of 7 FAR.

See Appendix E for additional description of Downtown zoning and land use regulations.

## ***IMPACTS***

### **Real Estate and Land Use Impacts**

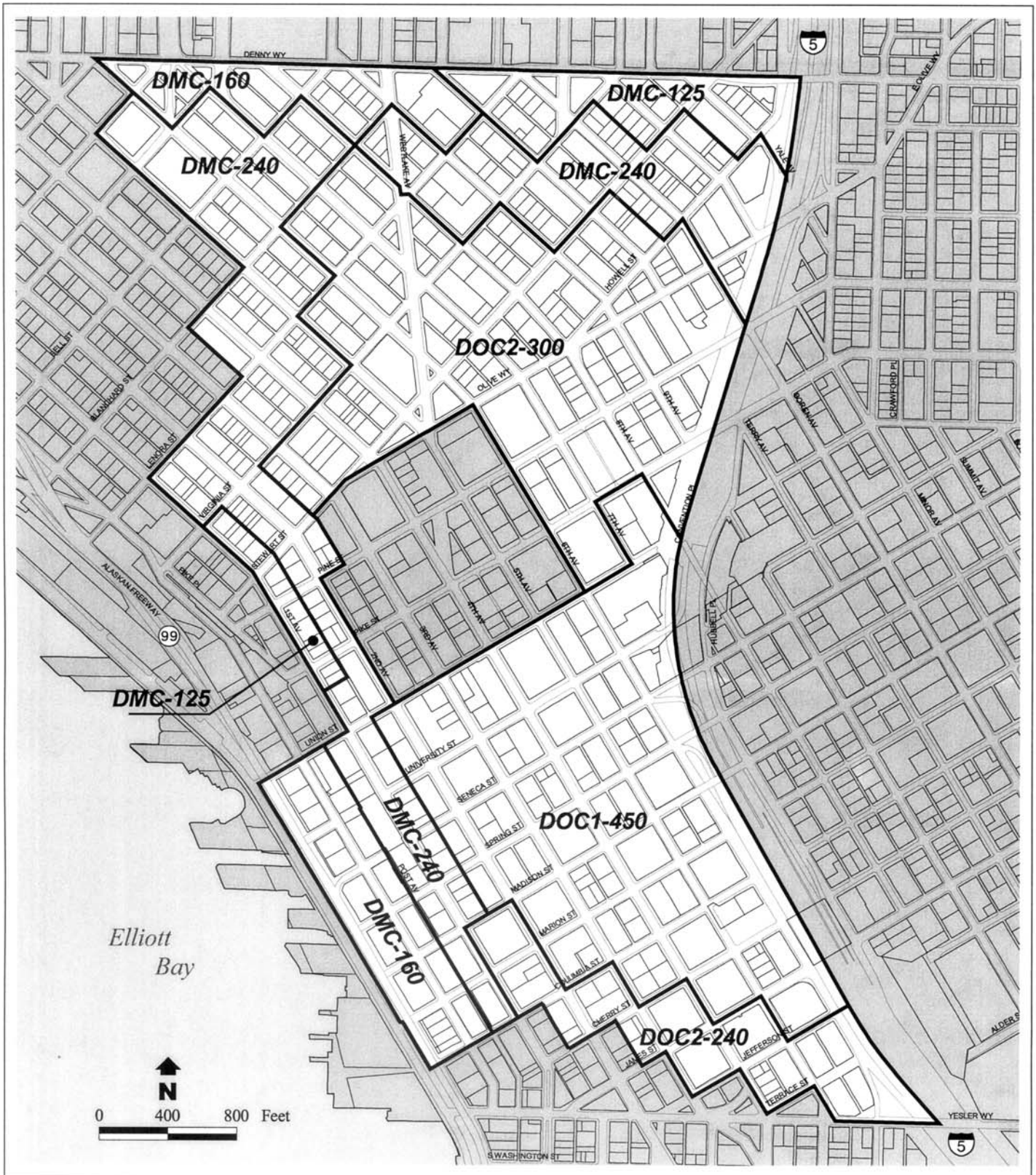
Under all alternatives, if the development forecasts are achieved, land use in the study area would be significantly transformed by the increased density of residential and commercial development. This transformation is expected to occur consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plans for the study area and is not necessarily an adverse impact.

Under all of the alternatives, including existing conditions, some City of Seattle landmarks, some existing housing and some buildings containing human service uses might be demolished. However, those demolitions would be as likely to occur under existing conditions as under any of the alternatives and are not significant adverse impacts of the alternatives.

In spite of a lack of significant unavoidable adverse impacts directly resulting from these alternatives, the different alternatives would have varying effects on: the capacity for new development; the concentration and mix of development over twenty years; the potential demolition of residential buildings and human service facilities; and the preservation of landmark and other key community structures.

### **ALTERNATIVE 1 – HIGH END HEIGHT AND DENSITY INCREASE**

Alternative 1 would create the greatest capacity for residential and commercial development of any alternative. In the long term, dense office development might be likely in all zones within the study area, interspersed with some mixed-use residential/commercial towers and some residential buildings adjacent to office towers. More commercial floor area would be permitted on any individual site and increased height limits would permit more floors of housing on a site, leading to denser market-rate residential structures. Consequently, if projects are consistently built to the maximum permitted FAR and height limit, fewer buildings would need to be built to meet the same demand for commercial and residential space. As a result, over the next twenty years, Alternative 1 would result in the fewest number of sites being redeveloped (potentially 54 projects on 57 acres under one development scenario). It is likely that this alternative would encourage the retention of small-scale buildings that enhance the character of Downtown as well as surface parking lots in their current uses.



**CURRENT ZONING WITHIN THE STUDY AREA**

**FIGURE 16**

- Zoning Boundary
- Outside Study Area

Strategic Planning Office  
City of Seattle  
May 20, 2002

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or merchantability, accompany this product.  
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## Development Capacity

Craig Kinzer & Company, Cushman and Wakefield and the Seneca Real Estate Group were retained to create a model of Downtown's potential commercial development capacity, commercial development distribution, and possible housing growth under the four EIS alternatives. Their analysis identified likely development sites within the study area, and the maximum potential development that could occur on each site. In addition, their study assessed the potential timing and geographic distribution of future development. Table 24 summarizes their findings about development capacity that can be accommodated on potential redevelopment sites in Downtown Seattle. Appendix F contains their report.

**Table 24**  
**Development Capacity on Underdeveloped and Vacant Parcels**

Urban Village/ Current Zoning	Alternative 1		Alternative 2		Alternative 3		Alternative 4	
	Comm. SF	Res. Units	Comm. SF	Res. Units <sup>1</sup>	Comm. SF	Res. Units	Comm. SF	Res. Units
<b>Commercial Core</b>								
DOC1	6.70M	0	6.70M	0	6.70M	0	5.52M	0
DOC2	3.93M	525	3.84M	590	3.84M	590	2.96M	430
DMC	2.68M	735	1.87M	750	1.87M	750	1.87M	755
<b>Denny Triangle</b>								
DOC2	12.49M	2,895	11.64M	3,545	10.07M	2,970 (4,520)	9.10M	2,485 (5,155)
DMC	7.98M	4,275	5.85M	2,865 (5,490)	4.98M	3,935 (6,810)	5.85M	2,890 (5,485)
<b>Belletown</b>								
DOC2	1.54M	375	1.43M	460	1.10M	325	1.10M	325
DMC	2.99M	1,700	2.35M	1,610	2.03M	2,105	2.35M	1,605
Total	38.32M	10,505	33.70M	9,820 (11,880)	30.00M	10,185 (14,595)	28.75M	8,490 (13,755)

Source: Craig Kinzer & Co., The Seneca Real Estate Group, Cushman & Wakefield of Washington, 2001; SPO, 2002

Under Alternative 1, the total capacity for office development on vacant and underutilized properties in the study area is 38.32 million square feet of commercial space. Based on ERA employment projections, this capacity could accommodate as much as 44 years worth of employment growth. Office development could occur throughout the study area, although there is much less capacity for additional office development in the Commercial Core Urban Village than in the Denny Triangle. If all available sites were redeveloped, approximately 867,200 square feet of existing office space would be demolished. This office space is generally in older buildings in fringe locations, currently providing space for non-profit organizations, smaller office-based businesses, and businesses that provide services to Downtown office tenants.

Under Alternative 1, there is capacity for 10,505 market-rate residential units in the study area, primarily on sites that would also accommodate commercial development. This capacity could meet approximately 11 years worth of Downtown's residential demand. Combined with areas Downtown outside of the study area, there would be capacity for 25 years worth of residential development.

If all identified sites are developed, six existing residential buildings could be demolished. These buildings currently contain 296 units. See the Housing section for more discussion of potential demolition of residential structures. Under this alternative the Denny Triangle TDC program would be essentially

<sup>1</sup> Where two numbers are presented, the first equals the maximum residential capacity without use of the TDC program. The second – in parentheses – equals the maximum capacity if all eligible sites were to use the TDC program. If only one number is presented, projects in that area would not be eligible to use the TDC program.

eliminated because the extra height that provides an incentive for additional residential development would be permitted outright for commercial structures. For more discussion, please see the Housing section.

This combination of office and residential development would result in a mix of high-rise office buildings, high-rise hotels (potentially topped with residential units) and high-rise residential buildings, all with ground-floor retail uses. Residential uses would be incorporated into high-density commercial projects. There would likely be few concentrations of residential uses; rather, housing projects would be interspersed among commercial structures.

## **20-Year Development Model**

According to the Kinzer & Co. analysis, changes to the zoning, as studied under this EIS, in and of themselves do not change the supply and demand cycles. In other words, changing permitted commercial densities does not necessarily lead to more development occurring in Downtown. The amount of space provided Downtown reflects the amount of demand for Downtown space. Demand will generally change based on regional, national and global economic trends, not because of changes to the Land Use Code. See the Population and Employment section for more discussion of likely demand for additional space.

Without a change in the demand for new space, there is not likely to be a change in the total amount of space that developers are likely to produce over a given period. The four alternatives generally focus on changes to the amount of office and residential space that could be built on particular sites. The main difference in how the different alternatives will affect land uses in Downtown Seattle over twenty years is in the number and size of buildings that would be developed to meet the demand for office and residential space. Over a given time period, alternatives that increase development capacity are likely to lead to fewer, larger buildings in the study area. Alternatives that do not increase the density limits will generally lead to more sites being developed over a specific period, dispersed more broadly within the study area.

In order to gain a better understanding of how the four alternatives might influence the mix of land uses in the study area, the City of Seattle developed a potential 20-year development projection for each alternative, between 2000 and 2020. Included are sixteen projects either completed since 2000 or under construction as of January 2002: nine office buildings, two new hotels, four residential buildings and one mixed office/residential building. Also included are seventeen projects that have undergone substantial permit review. These projects were generally assumed to continue to completion, unless a project is likely to take advantage of increased density limits. See Appendix G for more information.

Twenty years worth of demand would require more than the sites identified above. The development capacity model selected potential 20-year development sites based on the following assumptions:

- For most parts of Downtown, developers are likely to maximize office floor area allowed under the Land Use Code.
- If significant additional floor area were available within a permitted building envelope after a commercial area of a building has been built to its maximum permitted FAR, the additional space would be used for residential uses. This combination of commercial and residential uses was assumed to be most likely on sites that would accommodate the commercial and residential uses in separate structures on a single site.
- Based on recent development trends, residential uses were assumed to be preferred over commercial uses in the Belltown urban village, especially in those areas along 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues.
- No residential uses were assumed to be developed in the Downtown Office Core 1 zone.

- Larger sites with low-density development were assumed more likely to be redeveloped than smaller sites and those sites with significant structures.
- Sites close to the Downtown core and transit facilities are more likely to be redeveloped before sites farther from the Downtown core.

Table 25 summarizes the results of this development scenario exercise.

**Table 25**  
**Downtown Development Scenario 2000-2020<sup>2</sup>**

Urban Village/ Current Zoning	Potential Commercial Square Feet				Potential Residential Units			
	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
<b>Commercial Core</b>								
DOC1	4.12M	4.84M	4.84M	4.63M	0	0	0	0
DOC2	1.17M	1.17M	1.09M	1.09M	20	20	20	20
DMC	0.99M	0.70M	0.70M	0.70M	405	395	425	395
<b>Denny Triangle</b>								
DOC2	8.28M	7.88M	8.08M	7.65M	4,495	4,725	4,660	4,540
DMC	2.5M	2.08M	1.91M	2.35M	990	1,165	1,340	1,170
<b>Belltown</b>								
DOC2	0	0	0	0	565	565	420	420
DMC	0.87M	0.87M	0.87M	1.05M	895	770	685	770
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.93M</b>	<b>17.54M</b>	<b>17.49M</b>	<b>17.47M</b>	<b>7,370</b>	<b>7,640</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>7,315</b>

Source: Strategic Planning Office, 2001

### **Office Development**

Twenty years worth of employment growth could be concentrated primarily in the Denny Triangle, with more office space built in the DOC 2 and DMC zones than under many of the other alternatives. Potentially difficult development sites in the DOC 1 zone (those sites with older, potentially historic structures in active use; smaller sites less than a half-block in size; and sites owned by multiple parties) would be less likely to be redeveloped in the twenty-year time frame, even with proposed increases in height and density limits. This results in less office development in the Commercial Core. With increased density limits, DMC and DOC 2 sites that do not face those development challenges would be able to accommodate most of the projected demand for office space.

### **Hotels and Motels**

Hotels are likely to continue to be built near existing hotels, as these hotels are located to serve tourists, convention goers and business people. Potentially, 3,000 hotel rooms would be built over 20 years, generally within one block of the Retail Core (one hotel has been proposed along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue further south in the Commercial Core, across the street from existing hotels). If there is a market for additional high-end residential units in Downtown Seattle, many of these hotels could include condominium or apartment units, providing the residents of those units with many hotel services. One older automobile-oriented motel in the Downtown Office Core 2 zone may be redeveloped within 20 years.

<sup>2</sup> This analysis is hypothetical and models buildings that are at least 200,000 square feet. Differences in the total amount of development occurring under each alternative should not be seen as indicating an impact of the alternative. Instead, the model indicates general shifts of development from area to area because of higher or lower density limits.

## ***Housing***

In the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, residential growth within the study area may be concentrated on approximately 34 sites, including five structures currently under construction. The Denny Triangle would see the most residential development. Projects would include residential uses in a range of configurations, including individual residential towers, mixed-use buildings with commercial uses and residential uses in the same building, and mixed-use complexes with separate residential and commercial structures on a site. Additional residential development in the Commercial Core would be most likely as part of hotel projects. The south Belltown area is most likely to be developed with residential-only structures.

In 20 years, funding for approximately 2,475 subsidized units could be leveraged through funds from the Downtown bonus and TDR programs. If the height and density changes proposed under Alternative 1 are implemented, land prices within the study area will increase in order to reflect the increase in revenue that each particular site would see from a larger potential building. These increased land prices within the study area would increase the land acquisition costs low-income housing developers face and thus increase the costs to develop each additional unit. Consequently, subsidized housing units would most likely be built on sites in Downtown Seattle where land is less expensive than it is likely to be in the study area. Such sites would generally be located at the fringes of Downtown. See the Housing section for more discussion.

## ***Human Services***

With development to meet future demand for office and residential space, there is likely to be a loss of space for human services Downtown. Existing buildings that contain human services, especially those buildings with below-market rents owned by private property owners, are likely to be torn down for redevelopment. One site currently accommodating human services was identified as a potential redevelopment site within twenty years under Alternative 1. However, ten programs currently provided in Downtown Seattle are located on sites identified as potential redevelopment sites and any of these sites could be redeveloped over or beyond twenty years.

Examples of these potential redevelopment sites include all Downtown Seattle churches. Each Downtown church provides space for some human service agencies and each, because their current structures are much smaller than potential development on their sites, is likely to consider redevelopment over the next twenty years. At least one Downtown church has submitted a development proposal. If these churches decide to sell their Downtown property and move to another site outside of Downtown Seattle, some Downtown Seattle human services will be likely to relocate.

Even if no buildings containing human services are demolished, some human service agencies may still be displaced under Alternative 1. The height and density increases in Alternative 1 are likely to lead to higher land values reflecting increased future profits due to the increased development potential. As land values grow, property taxes will also increase. In order to offset these increased future costs, property owners will need to increase rents they charge their tenants. Both existing and new human service agencies seeking Downtown locations may find it difficult to pay rents that offset property owners' costs.

Relocating human services that need public subsidies for their services is not as simple as relocating other types of uses. Each City-funded human service agency must go through a neighborhood notification effort as it seeks to locate, move or expand within a neighborhood, providing barriers and increasing costs for locating human service agencies that are not present for other types of uses.

## ***Vacant and Underutilized Sites***

Over the next twenty years, 126 parcels identified as vacant or underutilized would likely be redeveloped under Alternative 1, if all sites were to be built to their maximum development capacity. These 126 parcels would be combined for approximately 54 projects. Sites within the Denny Triangle DOC2 zone are most likely to be redeveloped. Underdeveloped sites in the DOC1 zone and DMC zones are most likely to remain in their current uses: surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle, or smaller-scale buildings in the Commercial Core.

## **Historic Landmarks**

There are currently several incentives to encourage the preservation of City of Seattle Landmarks. In addition to local, state and federal tax incentives for rehabilitation of landmarks, owners of landmarks in the Seattle Downtown Urban Center are permitted to transfer unused development rights to other sites Downtown. Also, if a landmark is retained on a development site in many parts of the study area, developers are allowed to build taller commercial buildings. Given the breadth of incentives available Downtown, it is unlikely a developer would choose to tear down a designated City of Seattle landmark for redevelopment. Instead, developers have chosen, when possible, to incorporate landmarks into their site plans. Only one City of Seattle landmark located within a larger underdeveloped site was identified as a potential redevelopment site, the Old Norway Hall in the Denny Triangle. The owners of this property may propose to redevelop the half-block that the landmark sits on under Alternative 1 or any other zoning alternative. In addition, one landmark on the National Register not designated a City of Seattle Landmark, the William Volker Building (Lenora Square), was identified as a potential site for redevelopment.

Under any scenario, at least one City of Seattle landmark and at least one site on the National Register of Historic Places might be subject to demolition given the building's size compared to permitted development. However, neither of these sites is likely to be a primary development site, and this potential for demolition is not a significant adverse impact resulting from any alternative. Under Alternative 1, the Downtown TDR program might result in the transfer of 287,400 square feet of development rights from Landmark TDRs to new commercial structures.

Potentially more threatened are those sites identified by community groups and planning processes as important neighborhood “icons” or undesignated buildings that help to contribute to the unique character of their neighborhood. The owners of some of these buildings, because they do not receive the benefits of landmark status, may choose to demolish these buildings for development. The list of buildings in the following paragraph should not necessarily be considered eligible for landmark designation, nor should the list be considered an exhaustive list of historic resources or “icon” buildings in the study area. As years pass and different architectural styles and historical events are documented, other buildings may be eligible for landmark designation. The City is currently revising its 1979 Inventory of Historic Resources and more buildings may be added to the inventory as a result of that action.

Three different sources provide some indication of undesignated buildings important to community groups. The Seattle Commons/South Lake Union Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement developed a list of potential Landmarks and National Register sites for a large portion of the Denny Triangle. The Belltown neighborhood plan identified a number of “icon” buildings that the neighborhood seeks to preserve. Also, MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design did a visual survey of the Commercial Core neighborhood to identify “character buildings.” The following undesignated buildings are located on sites identified as redevelopable by this EIS.

## **BUILDINGS ON POTENTIALLY REDEVELOPABLE SITES IDENTIFIED AS “CHARACTER BUILDINGS”**

### **Belltown Neighborhood Plan “Icon Buildings”**

Façade of the Bethel Temple<sup>3</sup>  
Griffin  
Labuznik Building

Oxford Building  
Terminal Sales Annex

### **Commercial Core “Character Buildings”**

Central Building  
Dover Apartments  
Galland Building  
Marion Court

Seneca Building  
The Vault (aka Pure Fitness)  
Women’s University Club

### **Denny Triangle**

#### **“Buildings or Sites Likely to Meet Landmarks or National Register”**

Craftsman Press/Kendar Corporation  
Johnson Hudson Dealer/Westlake Chevrolet

Lloyd Building  
Pande Cameron

#### **“Buildings or Sites of Community Importance That May Meet Landmarks or National Register Criteria”**

Empire Company  
Greyhound Bus Terminal  
Quinton Instruments Building<sup>4</sup>

Seattle Trust Building/Times Square Garage  
Williamsburg Court

It is possible that any of these buildings is less susceptible to redevelopment under Alternative 1 because fewer sites are required to accommodate the demand for housing and commercial space expected over the next twenty years. However, an active property owner inclined to consider demolition of the landmark would likely see the increased development capacity on their site as an incentive to redevelop if they are able to meet market demand for space.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2 – CONCENTRATED OFFICE CORE**

Alternative 2 would result in a mix of land uses similar to Alternative 1. Some additional sites might be developed, resulting in either a loss of surface parking lot uses or the demolition of structures in the Downtown Office Core 1 zone. Over 20 years, Alternative 2 might result in the development of 55 sites on 58 acres, one additional site and one more acre than under Alternative 1.

### **Development Capacity**

Under Alternative 2, the total capacity for office development on vacant and underutilized properties within the study area is 33.7 million square feet of commercial space, approximately 12% fewer square feet of commercial space than under Alternative 1. This capacity could accommodate as much as 38 years worth of Downtown’s employment growth, 6 fewer years than under Alternative 1. The primary reduction in office capacity would occur in the DMC zone, where commercial development capacity would be reduced by 25%. In addition, the permitted commercial capacity would drop by 7% in the Denny Triangle’s DOC 2 zone.

<sup>3</sup> Construction has begun on the Cristilla project on the Bethel Temple site. This project is preserving the street-level façade of the building as part of a much larger residential project.

<sup>4</sup> A development proposal is currently under review for the Quinton Instruments Building. It would demolish the building and build a full-block mixed use project including a grocery store, two apartment towers and an office tower.

Under this alternative, there is capacity for 9,820 market-rate residential units in the study area, primarily on sites that would also accommodate commercial development. This capacity could meet approximately 11 years worth of Downtown's residential demand. Combined with areas outside of the study area, there would be capacity for 24 additional years of residential growth Downtown. The decrease in development capacity from Alternative 1 includes a number of shifts in development capacity. Under this alternative, capacity would increase by over 600 units in the DOC2 zone in the Denny Triangle. A decrease in the height limit in the DMC zones would reduce capacity for residential development in all DMC zones, including a capacity reduction of more than 1,400 units in the Denny Triangle DMC zones.

However, under this alternative, the Denny Triangle TDC program would be available to residential developers in the Denny Triangle DMC zone. The TDC program provides an incentive for additional residential development if that development transfers development rights from rural areas and mitigates impacts of increased development in the Denny Triangle. If all eligible sites were to use the TDC program, an additional 2,060 units could be accommodated in the DMC zone in the Denny Triangle, meeting three additional years worth of housing demand. It is assumed that the height and density increases proposed for the Denny Triangle DOC2 zone would terminate the program there.

This combination of office and residential development would result in a mix of high-rise office buildings, high-rise hotels (potentially topped with residential units) and high-rise residential buildings, all with ground-floor retail uses, with smaller scale structures at the edge of the study area. More residential units might be incorporated into high-density commercial projects, than under Alternative 1. If the TDC program was used in the DMC zone, there could be a mix of projects that combine commercial towers with taller residential towers on the same block, and other mixed-use projects that have commercial space topped by residential units, similar to the Millennium Tower.

## **20-Year Development Model**

### ***Office Development***

Office development is likely to occur in the same locations as in Alternative 1. Due to the reduced FAR limits in the Denny Triangle, one additional office building might be built to meet the demand for office space. This is likely to be built either on a more difficult development site in the DOC1 zone, or on a site further from DOC 1 in the Denny Triangle.

### ***Hotels and Motels***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 related to hotel development. Hotels built in the Denny Triangle would be slightly smaller under Alternative 2, due to reduced FAR limits. The reduction in density is likely to result in slightly fewer hotel rooms over the 20-year period, but likely not enough to encourage the development of an additional hotel.

### ***Housing***

In the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, residential growth may be concentrated on approximately 34 sites (same as Alternative 1), including 5 structures currently under construction. Because there would be more capacity for residential uses on each individual mixed-use site, the Denny Triangle neighborhood could see more of the projected residential development than under Alternative 1.

In 20 years, funding for approximately 3,200 subsidized units could be leveraged through funds from the Downtown bonus and TDR programs, up to 725 units more than under Alternative 1. These units would most likely be built on less-expensive available land in Downtown Seattle, generally at the fringes of Downtown.

### ***Human Services***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 regarding impacts on human service uses. Under Alternative 2, land prices and consequently rents are expected to increase to a lesser degree than under Alternative 1, but would likely increase in the DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones. Under Alternative 2, one structure currently containing human services would likely be demolished within the next 20 years.

### ***Vacant and Underutilized Sites***

Over the next 20 years, 129 parcels identified as vacant or underutilized would likely be redeveloped under Alternative 2, if all sites were built to maximum capacity. Under Alternative 2, three additional parcels would be developed than under Alternative 1. These 129 parcels would be combined for approximately 55 projects, one more than under Alternative 1. Sites within the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone are most likely to be redeveloped. Underdeveloped sites in the DOC 1 zone and DMC zones are most likely to remain in their current uses: surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle, or smaller-scale buildings in the Commercial Core.

### **Historic Landmarks**

Under Alternative 2, one more site than under Alternative 1 would likely be developed to meet demand for commercial uses. Depending on the market for new office space and development opportunities, this additional project would either locate on a site in the Commercial Core currently occupied by a “character building” or on a site with a surface parking lot in the Denny Triangle. Under this alternative as much as 343,750 square feet of potential commercial square feet could be transferred from City of Seattle Landmarks to new commercial buildings. This would be a 20% increase in the amount of Landmark TDR potentially acquired over 20 years over Alternative 1.

## **ALTERNATIVE 3 – RESIDENTIAL EMPHASIS**

Alternative 3 would result in a mix of land uses similar to Alternative 1, although residential enclaves would be encouraged to develop in areas rezoned to the Downtown Mixed-Use Residential (DMR) zone in the Denny Triangle and Belltown. Some additional sites might be developed, resulting in either a loss of surface parking lot uses or the demolition of structures in the DOC 1 zone. Between 2000 and 2020, Alternative 3 might result in the development of 58 sites on 60 acres, three additional projects on three more acres than Alternative 1.

### **Development Capacity**

Under Alternative 3, the total capacity for office development on vacant and underutilized properties in the study area is 30 million square feet of commercial space, approximately 20% fewer square feet of commercial space than under Alternative 1. This capacity could accommodate as much as 34 years worth of Downtown employment growth, 10 fewer years than under Alternative 1. The primary reduction in office capacity would occur in the DMC zone, where commercial development capacity would be reduced by 35%. The largest decrease would be in the Denny Triangle DMC zone, where commercial capacity would be 38% less than under Alternative 1. In addition, the permitted commercial capacity would drop by 16% in the DOC 2 zone, including a 20% drop in the capacity of the Belltown DOC 2 zone. In the DMC zones, office development is likely to include residential uses, in order to achieve maximum density limits under the zoning regulations.

Under Alternative 3, there is capacity for 10,675 market-rate residential units in the study area, a slight increase over Alternative 1. This capacity could meet approximately 12 years worth of Downtown residential demand. Combined with areas outside of the study area, there would be capacity for 25

additional years of residential growth Downtown. As with the other alternatives, residential development would occur primarily on sites that would also accommodate commercial development. Under Alternative 3, there is a greater likelihood of residential development in the DMC zones. Under this Alternative, maximum commercial density limits in the DMC zone could only be achieved by projects that include residential uses.

Under Alternative 3, the Denny Triangle TDC program would be available to residential developers in the Denny Triangle DMC zone and in those portions of the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone that are not subject to height and density increases. If all eligible sites used the TDC program, an additional 4,400 units could be accommodated in the Denny Triangle. This could meet five years worth of demand for Downtown housing.

This combination of office and residential development would result in a mix of high-rise office buildings, high-rise hotels (potentially topped with residential units) and high-rise residential buildings, often with ground-floor retail uses. More residential units might be developed in those areas currently zoned DMC zones, particularly those areas rezoned to DMR/C, than under Alternative 1. This more concentrated residential development could begin to create small residential enclaves, within a larger mixed-use area. If the TDC program was used, there could be a mix of projects that combine commercial towers with taller residential towers on the same block, and other mixed-use projects that have commercial space topped by residential units, similar to the Millennium Tower.

## **20-Year Development Model**

### ***Office Development***

Office development is likely to occur in the same locations as under Alternative 2. Due to the reduced FAR limits in the Denny Triangle, up to four additional office buildings might be built to meet demand for office space. These are likely to be built either on challenging development sites in the DOC 1 zone, or in the Denny Triangle on more peripheral sites.

### ***Hotels and Motels***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 3 related to hotel development. Hotels built in the Denny Triangle would be slightly smaller under Alternative 3, due to reduced density limits. The reduction in density is likely to result in slightly fewer hotel rooms over the 20-year period, but likely not enough to encourage the development of an additional hotel.

### ***Housing***

In the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, residential units may be built on two additional sites than projected under Alternative 1. As a result of additional capacity for residential uses on individual mixed-use sites, the Denny Triangle neighborhood would see more of the projected residential development than under Alternative 1.

Sites developed in those portions of the DMC zone that would be rezoned to DMR/C would be most likely to see additional residential development, where residential development had not been previously planned. In addition, some sites in the Commercial Core and Denny Triangle DMC zones previously projected to be developed with commercial-only buildings under Alternative 1 would be developed with mixed-use buildings. This would result from new regulations requiring a project in this zone to include residential units to achieve maximum commercial densities.

In 20 years, funding for approximately 2,800 subsidized units could be leveraged through funds from the Downtown bonus and TDR programs, approximately 50 fewer units than under Alternative 1. These units would most likely be built on less-expensive available land in Downtown Seattle, generally at the fringes of Downtown.

### ***Human Services***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 3 related to impacts on human service uses. Under Alternative 3, land prices and consequently rents are expected to increase to a lesser degree than under Alternative 1. Rents in areas rezoned to DMR might actually drop due to decreased commercial floor area limits, but would likely increase in the DOC 1 and those portions of the DOC 2 zones which would receive height and density increases. Under Alternative 3, one structure currently containing human services would likely be demolished within the next 20 years.

### ***Vacant and Underutilized Sites***

Over the next 20 years, 140 parcels identified as vacant or underutilized would likely be redeveloped under Alternative 3, if all sites were built to maximum capacity. Under this alternative, fourteen additional parcels would be developed than under Alternative 1. These 140 parcels would be combined for approximately 58 projects, four more than projected under Alternative 1. Sites within the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone are most likely to be redeveloped. Underdeveloped sites in the DOC 1 zone and DMC zones are most likely to remain in their current uses: surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle, or smaller-scale buildings in the Commercial Core.

### **Historic Landmarks**

Under Alternative 3, six more sites than under Alternative 1 would likely be developed in order to meet demand for commercial and residential uses. These additional projects would generally be located on sites predominantly used by surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle. However, one or two sites occupied by “character buildings” in the Commercial Core might be redeveloped, depending on the real estate market and the success of other projects in the Denny Triangle. As much as 300,000 square feet of Landmark TDR might be transferred over 20 years.

## **ALTERNATIVE 4 – NO ACTION**

Alternative 4 would result in a mix of land uses similar to Alternative 1, although more sites might be developed in the DMC zoned area over the next 20 years. Additional sites would be developed, resulting in either a loss of surface parking lot uses or the demolition of structures in the DOC1 zone. Between 2000 and 2020, this alternative may result in the development of approximately 61 sites on 63 acres, 7 additional projects on 6 more acres than under Alternative 1.

### **Development Capacity**

Under the existing zoning, the total capacity for additional office development in the study area is 28.75 million square feet of commercial space, approximately 25% square feet less than could be available under Alternative 1. This capacity could accommodate as much as 33 years worth of Downtown employment growth, 11 fewer years than under Alternative 1. Reductions in the office capacity would occur equally in the DMC and DOC 2 zones, where commercial development capacity would be 27% and 26% less than under Alternative 1. The largest decrease would be in the Belltown DOC 2 zone, where Alternative 4 would have 30% less commercial capacity than Alternative 1.

Under the current zoning, there is capacity for 8,490 market-rate residential units in the study area. This is equivalent to 81% of the residential capacity available under Alternative 1. The existing conditions could

meet approximately nine years worth of demand for Downtown residential space, and could be filled two years before Alternative 1. Areas outside of the study area Downtown could accommodate another thirteen years worth of residential demand. As with the other alternatives, residential development would occur primarily on sites that would also accommodate commercial development.

Under this alternative, the Denny Triangle TDC program would be available to residential developers in all Denny Triangle zones. If all eligible sites were to use the TDC program, an additional 5,280 units could be accommodated in the Denny Triangle, resulting in a 34% increase in development capacity over Alternative 1. The TDC program could add residential capacity to meet six years worth of Downtown residential demand.

This combination of office and residential development would result in a mix of high-rise office buildings, high-rise hotels (potentially topped with residential units) and high-rise residential buildings, all with ground-floor retail uses. If the TDC program was used, there could be a mix of projects that combine commercial towers with taller residential towers on the same block, and other mixed-use projects that have commercial space topped by residential units, similar to the current Millennium Tower. There would not likely be a defining mix of uses within the study area outside of the DOC 1 zone. Residential and commercial uses would be mixed, depending on the relative strengths of the office and residential markets and the orientation of Downtown developers and property owners.

## **20-Year Development Model**

### ***Office Development***

Office development is likely to occur in the same locations as under Alternative 2. Due to the lower density limits in all areas, as many as seven additional half-blocks might be redeveloped with office towers to meet the demand for office space. These are likely to be built either on challenging development sites in the DOC 1 zone or on DMC sites predominantly used for surface parking in the Denny Triangle.

### ***Hotels and Motels***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and existing conditions related to hotel development. Hotels built in the Denny Triangle would be smaller under Alternative 4, due to lesser density limits. The lesser density is likely to reduce the supply of hotel rooms over the 20-year period, potentially encouraging the development of one additional hotel on a site near the existing concentrations of hotels.

### ***Housing***

In the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, residential units may be built on two more sites than projected under Alternative 1, one mixed-use project and one residential-only tower. As a result of these additional projects, the Denny Triangle would see more residential development than under Alternative 1.

In 20 years, funding for approximately 2,000 subsidized units could be leveraged through funds from the Downtown bonus and TDR programs, almost 500 fewer units than under Alternative 1. These units would most likely be built on less-expensive available land in Downtown Seattle, generally at the fringes of Downtown.

### ***Human Services***

There are few differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 related to impacts on human service uses. Under Alternative 4, land prices and consequently rents are not expected to increase beyond increases due to inflation. Under Alternative 4, one structure currently containing human services would likely be demolished within the next twenty years.

### ***Vacant and Underutilized Sites***

Over the next twenty years, 152 parcels identified as vacant or underutilized would likely be redeveloped under Alternative 3, if all sites were built to their maximum development capacity. Under this alternative, fourteen additional parcels would be developed than under Alternative 1. These 152 parcels would be combined for approximately 61 projects, seven more than projects than under Alternative 1. Sites within the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone are most likely to be redeveloped. Underdeveloped sites in the DOC 1 zone and DMC zones are most likely to remain in their current uses: surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle, or smaller scale buildings in the Commercial Core.

### **Historic Landmarks**

Under Alternative 4, eight more sites than under Alternative 1 would likely be developed in order to meet demand for commercial and residential uses. These additional projects would predominantly locate on sites used as surface parking lots in the Denny Triangle. However, two or more sites occupied by “character buildings” in the Commercial Core, Belltown or Denny Triangle might be redeveloped, depending upon the real estate market and the success of projects in the Denny Triangle. If Landmark TDR is available for purchase, up to 217,500 square feet of Landmark TDR might be transferred from Landmarks to new commercial projects between 2000 and 2020.

## ***MITIGATION STRATEGIES***

The City of Seattle currently has several programs in place that can mitigate the impacts of specific developments on land use in Downtown Seattle. Among these programs are:

- project-level SEPA review, which identifies and requires mitigation for the impacts of specific buildings;
- the City of Seattle’s Transfer of Development Credits and Multifamily Tax Exemption programs, which encourage residential development in targeted areas;
- the Downtown Seattle housing bonus (public benefit features) program, which mitigates the impacts of increased development densities through voluntary payments or provision of public benefit features;
- the City’s Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that allows property owners of Downtown City of Seattle landmarks, new public open space and low-income buildings to transfer the right to develop unused floor area to another site in Downtown;
- the City’s TDR bank program by which the City acquires TDRs from eligible sites and holds them in trust until a market exists to acquire the development rights;
- exemptions given for facilities providing public benefits from Floor Area Ratio limits; and
- restrictions on the use of the voluntary TDR and bonus programs to those projects that do not demolish a City of Seattle landmark.

In addition, buildings designated as City of Seattle Landmarks are eligible for a number of additional incentives including:

- zoning code relief, which allows the Director of the Department of Design, Construction and Land Use to provide flexibility of use, parking ratios and a number of other land use code provisions to encourage the preservation and use of historic buildings;

- building code relief, which allows the Director of the Department of Design, Construction and Land Use to modify specific requirements of the building code for landmark buildings;
- special tax valuation, which revises the assessed value of a historic property, subtracting significant rehabilitation costs for up to 10 years if they are approved by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board.

## **Possible Mitigation Strategies**

In addition to the programs listed above, the possible mitigation measures discussed below could be applied to any of the alternatives as tools to ensure that as the neighborhood changes it retains a combination of land uses that meets the City's goals for Downtown Seattle.

### **Residential Character**

In order to ensure achievement of residential enclaves as proposed in the Denny Triangle Neighborhood plan, specific areas could be rezoned to better promote residential development character. Rezones, such as those proposed under Alternative 3, would maintain or increase residential development limits while reducing commercial development limits, thus encouraging residential development. Also see the Housing section discussion of mitigation strategies to encourage the development and retention of low-income housing, and strategies to encourage housing for families with children and other large households.

### **Human Services**

New programs may be required to preserve opportunities for human services facilities in Downtown Seattle.

- The City could give priority for City funds to those low-income housing projects that would create space for human services agencies as part of street-level uses.
- A Human Services TDR program could be created to allow property owners to sell development rights off of existing buildings that reserve space for human service agencies. This could create a source of funding for human service agencies seeking to acquire permanent space. It would also support other property owners with long-term commitments to provide space for human service agencies. This would be one way to offset acquisition and/or renovation costs, or to subsidize rents for human service agencies.
- A human services nexus analysis could be funded, similar to those performed for low-income housing and childcare. This would allow the City to implement a human services bonus program that could leverage the development of office and hotel buildings above a specific size to fund the development of new spaces for those Downtown human service agencies that serve Downtown employees.

### **Historic Landmarks**

In order to preserve historic landmarks and neighborhood-identified "character buildings" within the study area, several strategies could be implemented.

- The resources of the City's TDR bank, which acquires development rights from eligible sending sites, could be targeted toward acquiring development rights from those City of Seattle Landmarks that are most at risk for redevelopment due to their size and location. The City could work with other agencies to identify and acquire additional funds for the acquisition of development rights from City of Seattle Landmarks. If funding could be identified, the City could actively work to designate additional structures within the study area as City of Seattle Landmarks.

- The City could restructure the bonus and TDR programs by removing the one FAR above the base FAR that can be achieved through programs that are lower priorities to the City and neighborhoods. If this one FAR rule is removed, additional resources would be available to landmark structures, housing, child care and open space. The City could remove the option to use lower-priority programs to mitigate the impacts of development above the base FAR limit in the DMC zone.
- The City could consider the impacts of projects requesting street or alley vacations on the retention and character of City of Seattle Landmarks. As the City grants alley vacations, thus selling City property, the City should consider the impacts of those vacations on historic landmarks and neighborhood character buildings.
- The City could work with non-profit housing providers and property owners to leverage the use of Downtown housing TDRs and housing bonus funds for the preservation of buildings identified by neighborhoods as important “character buildings.”

### ***SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS***

Under all alternatives, if forecasted development occurs, land uses in the study area would be significantly transformed by the increased density of residential and commercial development. This transformation is interpreted to be consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plans for the study area, and is not interpreted to be a significant unavoidable adverse impact.

Similar to existing conditions, some City of Seattle landmarks, some existing housing and some buildings containing human service uses might be demolished. This could occur under any of the alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, and is not interpreted to be a significant unavoidable adverse impact.